

task has been one of selection. In many respects, the seven letters included in this small volume represent but one reaction repeated seven times. There is no indication of the psychological effect of the fire upon the very rich and the very poor. The reactions of a common laborer to the calamity of 1871 could have furnished an interesting contrast.

This attractively bound volume contains reproductions of commercial notices and of proclamations issued by the mayor following the crisis, as well as photographs of well-known Chicago landmarks as they appeared before and after the fire. Mention should also be made of the appropriate lithographs which preface the letters. These lithographs are the work of Joseph Trautwein and possess definite caricatural value. Angle's judicious footnoting serves as an indispensable guide in acquainting the reader with people and places mentioned in the letters. Anyone desiring a souvenir book on the Great Chicago Fire will be interested in this volume.

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Richard H. Caldemeyer

Minnesota Under Four Flags. Edited by Mary W. Berthel. (St. Paul, Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Centennial Publications, Number 1, 1946, pp. 15. Maps. Fifty cents.)

Florida Under Five Flags. By Rembert W. Patrick. (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1945, pp. xiv, 140. Illustrations, maps, and index. \$2.50.)

It may be a testimonial to our present world-mindedness that the titles chosen for these recent books, dealing with such widely separated subjects, are so nearly identical and so international. At any rate, this observation of the fact that such distant places as Florida and Minnesota were linked together at various times in their histories under the banners of France, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States successively, pays tribute to the imperial vision of yesteryears. In this pennant chase, Florida edges out Minnesota 5-4, only by virtue of having joined the Confederate states of America for a brief sojourn under the Stars and Bars.

The Minnesota booklet is an excellent recapitulation of the state's usually checkered territorial history. Its fifteen

maps show, with remarkable simplicity and clarity, Minnesota's position under her four flags, and for good measure, her vicissitudes as a possession of the United States. It is a saga of dismemberment, for rarely between the year when she ceased to be a small corner of New France (1763) and that in which she became a sovereign state (1858), did Minnesota exist as even a part of a single unit. Denizens of the Gopher state should know these interesting facts about their homeland and should be duly grateful to the generous citizen of St. Paul whose gift enabled the historical society to publish them in such an attractive manner.

Although Patrick's book is more pretentious than the Minnesota pamphlet, it is likewise written in celebration of his state's centennial and for the same kind of popular circulation. The deliberate effort to write a comprehensive history that the tired business man can cover in one evening has resulted in a somewhat disappointing book. Excessive condensation blurs the style and excludes such colorful figures as Alexander McGillivray and William Bowles, to say nothing of semi-legendary pirates from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Florida's tangled border problems, the complicated diplomacy in which she was constantly involved until 1819, the still more complicated land grant imbroglio inherited from the Spanish regime and the welter of reconstruction policies are all dealt with so slightly as to leave the reader barely conscious of their existence. These were undoubtedly intentional sacrifices to the worthy cause of writing a readable story, as was the omission of footnotes and a bibliography. Such brevity, both in text and appendices, makes it impossible for a reviewer to detect the use or disuse of such monographs in this field as those of Fuller, Whitaker, Sieber, Foreman, and W. W. Davis.

The author, however, shuns the temptation to eliminate economics in favor of romance. His brief but sharply etched analyses of such factors as shifting population centers, the small role actually played by plantation economy and the essentially frontier character of the peninsula's post-reconstruction development are among the best parts of his book. His last two chapters, presenting one of the few integrated accounts of Florida's amazing history since 1920, go far to justify the publication of the entire work. In spite of the appealing nature of the subject, histories of Florida are not

numerous. This one should be welcomed by those for whom it was specifically intended and it will furnish them with all the useful information on the subject that they will need.

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